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ABSTRACT

The structure of the university English department in Third World countries is examined with respect to curricula, objectives, policies, and traditions. Examples are drawn from Arab countries, India, Pakistan, and several African countries. The typical syllabus in English has offered a complete coverage of English literature, but little emphasis on language and linguistics. In view of the linguistic and practical needs of students in Third World countries, the validity of maintaining the traditional structure is questioned. Rather, the need is for departments in which language, literature, linguistics, and methodology are incorporated into the curriculum with the objective of building the graduate's linguistic competence in preparation for employment to meet the needs of the developing community. The study of English literature could be carried on in an honors course. Other proposals are that literature be adapted for the purpose of linguistic instruction, taught in the native language, or taught in courses in comparative literature; it could be taught as a verbal art, used as a tool for political study, or incorporated into a general literature curriculum. Any of these solutions would de-emphasize the controversial colonial aspect of English. A bibliography is included. (MSE)

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# RESTRUCTURING THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT IN THIRD WORLD UNIVERSITIES

## Alternative Approaches for the Teaching of English Literature*

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# RESTRUCTURING THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT IN THIRD WORLD UNIVERSITIES

## Alternative Approaches for the Teaching of English Literature*

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In two earlier papers (Zughoul, 1983; Zughoul, 1985), the writer examined the imbalances in the English department curriculum and reassessed the fundamental objectives of an English department at an Arab university in the light of a set of assumptions deriving from linguistic, cultural, economic, and motivational considerations. These papers were given at two different conferences on the problems of teaching English language and literature at the university level in the Arab world, where a great number of questions related to objectives, curriculum, policies, etc. have finally been subjected to discussion, and raised on a nationwide basis.

In this paper, the writer will examine the structure of the English department in Third World (henceforth, TW) countries, i.e. developing countries, as to their curricula, objectives, policies, and traditions; and question the validity of maintaining such a structure based on national, cultural and motivational considerations. The objectives are to minimize cultural estrangement and alienation on the part of the student and maximize the healthy development of his potential, and to satisfactorily and economically meet the direct practical needs of TW communities. There is much in common among the TW English departments in contrast to those in English-speaking countries, those in Europe, and in some Asian countries where there is a degree of common cultural background (Pratt, 1982). TW examples will be drawn from the Arab

*The writer wishes to thank Professor John G. Bordie of The University of Texas at Austin for reading and extensively commenting on an earlier version of this paper.

world, India, Pakistan, and a number of African countries.

There is no doubt that the basic academic design of the English department in TW universities has been either inherited or borrowed. The early English departments in these countries were modeled after their counterparts in British universities. This replication has led to an acceptance of British English department objectives, standards, and achievement by TW countries. Such a design could not have been a historical coincidence. In fact, in its earliest stages, it must have been planned to serve the British colonial motives which had been vehemently stressed by such administrators and educational planners as T. B. Macauly, who sought to create "a class of persons Indian in blood and color but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and intellect (Daswani, 1982)." Macauly's dream, as early as 1833 (Mukherjee, 1982), consisted of "the pacific triumph of reason over barbarism and of establishing an empire which is the `imperishable empire of our arts and our morals, our literature and our laws.'" It was established as an objective for the British colonial administration to promote European literature among the "natives." European literature, however, was basically restricted to include only English literature and some translated European classics chosen on the basis of the "colonial superiority and moral authority of such literature," as Das Gupta (1970:42) maintains. Gradually, as Daswani (1982) points out, English education came to be identified with the study of English literature, which gave the "natives" the right to be considered "cultured, well read, and, in fact, educated." That kind of education was not restricted to the colonies; it reflected the current trend in education in Britain. The case was not any different in the African colonies.

Mazrui (1968:184-186) discusses the factors that made the attitudes of early Kenyan and Nigerian nationalists to English

"nationalistic." He concludes that the main factor is the association between English education and intellectual competence; the Negro was assumed to be incapable of attaining such intellectuality. To contradict this racialistic myth of the Negro "retarded mentality," attempts were made to master the language. Mazrui quotes Kimble, author of A Political History of Ghana, who states that "education to many people came to mean simply the ability to speak and write English." He also quotes Coleman, the author of Nigeria: Background to Nationalism, who maintains that it is not uncommon to find a semieducated Nigerian working as a steward who can "quote the Bible and recite Hamlet." This colonial superior attitude that equates intellectuality with an English education has led to Mazrui's creation of such provocative terms as the "Indo-Saxons," "Afro-Saxons," and "Black Europeans" (Mazrui 1975:11-14). It has also prompted Raghuvira (Das Gupta, 1970:179) to ask such questions as: "Shall we be anglicised, shall we be turned into Greeks and Latins, and shall we then alone pick up the few crumbs thrown to us as refuse. . .by the West?", and Mazrui to demand the de-Anglicization and deracialization of English.

No wonder then, that the English departments in TW universities have been dominated by the literature component of the curriculum at the expense of the needs, motives, and aspirations of the learner and his community. If we assume a three-way division for the curriculum into language, linguistics, and literature, it can be safely generalized that the bulk of the curriculum in these departments consists of literature study. The author (Zughoul, 1983) examined the curricula of a number of English departments at Arab universities (the universities of Baghdad, Iraq; Damascus, Syria; Kuwait, Kuwait; Yarmouk, Jordan; Amman, Jordan) and the two American universities in the Middle East area and concluded that the curricula of these departments (with the exception of the American

University of Beirut) are heavily dominated by the literature component. The same can be generalized to the rest of the TW countries. In some of these countries, the study of English literature does not only dominate the syllabus of the English department, but also shapes the syllabus of the secondary schools. Harrison (1974:46-48), in a chapter entitled "Language and Literature," gives some striking examples of this trend from different parts of the world. His examples, accompanied with his inquiries and comments, show an extension of the traditional dogma for the teaching of English literature:

1. Pupils in the examination year (the seventh year of English) will study extracts from Milton, Goldsmith, Addison, Wordsworth, Shelley, Coleridge, Thackeray, George Eliot, Dickens. (A western European country, 1963)

   Question: What is going to be the effect of all this on the pupils' own performance in English, where presumably a Twentieth-Century model is required?
   Question: Aren't there any recommendable Twentieth-Century authors?
   Question: Is it a valid aim in a school English course to give an encapsulated history of English literature?

2. Wordsworth, R. L. Stevenson, Shakespeare, Longfellow, Ben Johnson, T. L. Peacock, D. G. Rosetti, Emerson, Lamb, Moore, Mrs. Hemans (authors represented in a school's textbook, a South Asian country).

   Comment: I find Emerson difficult enough to understand myself, and I do not believe that the children forced to study this book, for whom English is a second or third language, will find him any easier.

   Question: What has Mrs. Hemans, that paragon of Victoria moral uplift, got to say to an independent Asian country?

The typical syllabus of an English department in a TW country has been considered lacking unless it offers a complete coverage of English literature with courses on the different periods, genres, and major writers. After two introductory survey courses covering the chronological development of English literature, the offerings typically include such titles as medieval literature, Shakespeare,

English poetry from Chaucer to Milton, poetry from Dryden to the present, metaphysical poetry, Renaissance drama, Victorian literature, the Romantics, Elizabethan and Jacobian drama, the epic, the lyric, the rise and development of the novel, twentieth century poetry or literature, the essay, Restoration drama, seventeenth century English literature, contemporary American literature, major writers, and literary criticism. Ibrahim (1983:25) states that the literature component at the University of Jordan, for example, represents some sixty five percent of the English department curriculum.

The student has to take a set of these courses as a departmental requirement, and some others as departmental electives; however, chronology is a decisive factor in the criteria for choice, whether in the case of the requirements or in the electives. Genre is another criterion. Rarely are other prime considerations made such as the proficiency of the student in English or his own particular interests, let alone the interests and immediate needs of the community.

The other two components of the syllabus--namely, language and linguistics--show a lack of balance in the curriculum, where the language component in particular stands out as the weakest. Ibrahim (1983:24) supports this claim. It typically includes two courses in communication skills and a course in writing. Rarely does a department in a TW country offer solid language training, i.e., training in reading comprehension, listening comprehension, term paper writing, or speech. In fact, the curriculum mysteriously assumes that the incoming student is proficient in the language and that he does not need any further language training. This, indeed, is a very unrealistic assumption, and it has, to a far extent, accounted for the failure of the English department in TW countries to respond to the main needs of the communities these universities

are supposed to serve.

The linguistics component of the English department in TW countries is dubious. Typically, it consists of an introduction to the study of language and a course(s) on phonology, syntax, and sometimes semantics. However, because of the increasing number of linguists and because of the tradition of automatically placing them, regardless of their areas of specialization, in the English department, pressure has been exercised on these department councils to offer more linguistics courses to undergraduates. Such offerings in some departments are a replication of graduate programs in linguistics in some European or American universities. In fact, a look at some of these offerings reflects what the faculty members want to teach, and not what the student needs, wants, or is supposed to study. It is also generally assumed that these linguists, even though they have not done their work on English and might well have done it on their native languages, are "experts" in language pedagogy and in all cases they are given the language courses in the department to teach. On the average, those colleagues have neither the training nor the motivation to teach language, and in fact they are usually misplaced in an English department. Ibrahim (1983:24-25) finds the position of linguistics in the English department to be "incongruous," and concludes that a linguist is no substitute for a language teacher. Bangole (1977) views this issue in the context of what he calls the "Ph.D. Craze" in Arab universities; the problem is seen as a "double-barreled drawback": a desire to impress is compounded by a misunderstanding of the qualification itself, which contributes to the professional malaise. Bangole's particular example is that of Ph.D. holders in linguistics who teach basic English. He firmly asserts that it is dubious that such a linguist can teach EFL if he has not been properly trained. As Wilkins (1972:217-227) points out, though language teachers can

make use of the new insights gained by the scientific study of language, linguistics and language teaching remain two different fields.

In this connection, it is worth adding that literature specialists are assumed to be language teachers as well. But as Healey (1966:11, as quoted by Lattorre and Palacios, 1980:229) contends, language teaching and the study of literature are not "necessarily concomitant activities which can be carried on by the same person concurrently." Such an assumption is partly based on the recognition of the significant developments in language teaching methodology and the emergence of the "science of applied linguistics," which has become a worthwhile field of research.

The competence of the incoming student, on the average, leaves much to be desired. In fact, it can be safely generalized that the linguistic competence of the incoming student and, for that matter, even the graduate from a TW university does not enable him to make sense of a literary piece, let alone appreciate it. The student usually ends up glossing vocabulary items rather than studying literature for appreciation and analysis.

Well-documented research evidence on the competence of the English major is scanty, but examples of general impressionistic evaluation are available in a variety of references. The author (Zughoul, 1985) reported the results of proficiency testing of the graduates of the English department of Yarmouk University, Jordan, where the standards were judged to be favorably comparable with those of the rest of Arab universities. The average equated mean score of the three groups of graduates (168 students) who took the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP) was 67.75 (individual scores were 68.22, 69.02, and 66.02), which is interpreted in the manual of the test as "Not proficient enough to take any academic work." This average mean score indicates that

just a few of our graduates would qualify for admission into the freshman program of an English language university.

In another study in Jordan, Abu Hamdia (1983) solicited the views of some employers of English department graduates whose jobs require the use of English. He states the following unqualified conclusion:

> In this survey no diversion of views was discerned as to the inadequacy of the preparation of English department students in the communicative skills, both written and oral, as called for by the job requirements (To many of us this sounds like stating the obvious).

Abu Hamdia also maintains that other deficiencies include being instructor dependent, being unable to deduce and analyze, being test dependent and unable to develop awareness, and lacking the skill to recognize the differences between language varieties.

Ibrahim (1983:23), in evaluating the English competence of the graduates of the University of Jordan, found that most faculty members are not totally happy with the quality of English with which the graduates leave. In fact, these faculty members are often embarrassed when asked by the principal of a private school or by a business manager to recommend one of the graduates. "There have been cases," Ibrahim states, "when in all honesty I could not recommend any of our graduates for that year."

Okby (1982) even extends the problem to native speakers of English and feels that "underachievement in the field of English as a language has never been so acutely sensed, as it is now both at home and abroad, in a world that has never stood in greater need for communication in the English language." In India, for example, Daswani (1982) concludes that no one has ever learned English in the formal educational system and that those who have acquired mastery of the language did so outside the Indian school or university. He attributes this to the fact that British educators, in their attempt to create brown Englishmen in India, did not pay any serious

attention to systematic instruction in the language. Instead, they sought to replicate the English school and university systems where English as a language needed little attention. Even literature teachers have either refused to acknowledge the fall of standards or disclaimed responsibility for the improvement of standards.

Pratt (1982) expressed his conviction that English departments in TW countries are only concerned with providing their students with an "impressive transcript" when they apply to graduate schools. While those students do not lack intelligence, "their general level of English is weak and they seldom have the necessary reading background to cope with undiluted specialized courses." Spencer (1979:54), in an experimental study on Iranian college students majoring in English literature, concluded that second year students are "partially" able to understand literary texts while third- and fourth-year students are able to understand, but unable to respond; both groups are frustrated as a result of this "non-involvement" and inability to respond.

Gilroy-Scott (1983:1-2), talking about overseas students, maintains that all too often "emphasis on literary knowledge disguised poor language attainments--`The maxi-coat of literature hiding the mini-skirt of language (Arthur King).'" Gilroy-Scott asserts that the picture emerging from overseas institutions shows"increasing numbers of new students lacking both the background and the necessary study skills." Those ideas are shared by Rodger (1983:50-51), who maintains that many ESL students with "pitifully low proficiency" are often exposed to thoroughly institutionalized "English Literature" degree syllabuses. These syllabuses are modelled on "archaic British ones," which do not provide continued training in the use of English "elementary linguistics and socio-linguistics of Modern English," and where the sole mode of instruction is the information loaded lecture.

The average incoming English major in TW countries is generally quite motivated to study English; however, his motivation is more instrumental than integrative in nature. In other words, his incentives for the study of English are not his intrinsic interest in the language or the literature, nor do they stem from his admiration of Western languages and culture to the point where he would like to be accepted as a member of these communities. Rather, he is deeply interested in the utilitarian aspects of English studies. Research evidence in this area strongly indicates that the motivation for learning English in TW countries is instrumental in nature.

Attitudinal studies conducted on Arab students such as those by the author and others (Zughoul et al., 1979; Zughoul and Taminian, 1984), Salih (1981), and Harrison et al. (1975) have consistently shown that Arab students are instrumentally motivated to learn English and that they are well aware of the utility of knowing English. Those studies were corroborated in other TW countries. Lukmani (1972) arrived at the same conclusion in her India study. Ibrahim (1983) concludes that a knowledge of English is an important factor in social and economic power and stratification, showing its utility in TW countries. He gives Mazrui's supporting conclusions in his studies of African countries. There is a comparable situation in the Philippines. Pickett (1980), depending on data collected by Massad and Dunlop ( ) in their IAEEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) English proficiency study in ten countries, concludes that on the measures of utility, one can detect some very interesting indicators of motivation. He uses Thailand as an example where "the overwhelming majority of Thais thought English would help them get a good job (88.1%), would be needed for further schooling (89.3%) and would enable them to read what they wanted to read (77.0%)."

Pickett (1980) prefers interest (integrative motivation) to recognition of utility (instrumental motivation) because the latter showed negative effects as far as achievement is concerned throughout the IAEEA study, a claim that has been controversial.

Talking about English as a vehicle of both modernization and westernization in India, Kelkar (1982:49) asserts that English, even at this date, still serves as an instrument for "internal colonialism as it were." Kelkar bases his conclusion on the utilitarian functions English performs in the Indian society. His following statement about the utility of English might well apply to any TW situation.

> You have either to belong to the English-knowing minority or to be in a position to hire people from that minority to get ahead in the world and possibly reach the top. There are no signs of this picture changing in the near future. Anybody who wants to get ahead or wants to see his children get ahead tries his best to master the English language at least in its utilitarian functions.

Shaw (1983) conducted an attitudinal survey among final year bachelor degree students in three TW countries (Singapore, 170 students; India, 324; and Thailand, 313) using a closed format questionnaire that directly asked for responses to certain aspects of their need for English. Shaw found that "the most striking . . . reasons are the ones generally associated with the instrumental type of motivation" while most of the reasons rejected by sometimes overwhelming majorities in each country "epitomize the kind of integrative motivation that has been stressed as being crucial to second language achievement." What those students want to say is that an affinity for English-speaking countries is <u>not</u> a reason for the study of English.

What kinds of jobs are expected by an English graduate in a TW country? Studies indicate that most graduates go into the teaching profession. The rest go into clerical, translation, management, and administrative jobs, where--in the overwhelming majority of the

cases--their linguistic competence is called upon. Rarely does their knowledge of English literature become directly relevant to their work. English has already reached a stage where it can be called the international language of business, aviation, banking, industry, and even scholarship. Dependence on the language as a means of instruction, especially in higher education, is likely to continue for awhile. It is always the responsibility of the English department to provide the needed expertise.

One further assumption of direct relevance to this paper is that the university in a TW country has to respond to the needs of the community. Education for education's sake is a luxury that cannot be afforded, even in oil-rich countries. This conviction has been expressed by a number of researchers in TW countries. El-Mowafy (1983), in "The Philosophy of Teaching Foreign Languages and Literature in Arab Universities" maintains:

> A university exists primarily to serve the community which has created it. . . . A university's first objective is to help solve the problems posed by the society of which it is a part and the experience thus gained may be applicable to other societies with similar problems. . . . A department of English which is a part of an Arab University does not exist to serve the needs of either the English language or English literature. These needs are well looked after elsewhere.

Jawad (1983) also maintains:

> The universities in the Third World, I believe, must perform a function which is entirely devoted to the actual needs of their social and economic development. This requires constant re-adjustment of outlook and revision of programmes on their part, in order to both cater for societal needs, and to develop themselves as useful institutions. Otherwise, Third World universities face the tragic result of becoming merely badly organised museums of knowledge.

Jawad (1983) asserts his firm belief that TW countries cannot afford the luxury of maintaining expensive universities just for the sake of completing "our decor as independent states." He also states that TW universities can and do impede rather than promote development and progress of TW communities, especially where these

universities do not contribute to the improvement of the quality of graduates or the excellence of research.

Now, as Munro (1983) puts the question, "Why should non-native speakers bother to study English literature at all?" Why, given those previously discussed considerations, does a student from a TW country want to study English literature? A traditional view which maintains that the study of literature in a liberal arts education broadens the intellectual horizons of the student and sharpens his sensibilities has served as a base as well as a theoretical framework for the teaching of literature in schools and university systems in English-speaking countries. The teaching of literature, according to this view, is defended on the grounds of strong advocacy for the intrinsic values of literature. Mathieson (1975) calls such a view the Victorian educators' belief in the "character building powers of the classical English literature curriculum." One of the earlier strong proponents of this view is Arnold, who in 1880 maintained that good poetry tends "to form the soul and character," that poetry supersedes religion and philosophy, and who called literature "the greatest power in Education" (Mathieson, 1975). Mathieson (1975) also quotes the Newblot Committee, which was set up after the first World War "out of the anxiety that too little literature was taught in British schools," as saying, "Literature is not just a subject for academic study, but one of the chief temples of the human spirit, in which all should worship." The following two quotations by Bennet and Leavis express this philosophy of English literature teaching in its strongest version.

> The aim of literary studies is not to amuse the hours of leisure; it is to awake one's self, it is to be alive, to intensify one's capacity for pleasure, for sympathy and for comprehension. . . . An understanding appreciation of literature means an understanding appreciation of the world, and it means nothing else. . . . People who don't want to live, people who would sooner hibernate than feel intensely, will be wise to eschew literature. They had better, to quote from the finest passage in a fine poem,

> "sit around and eat blackberries." "The sight of a common bush afire with God" might upset their nerves. (Bennet, 1909; reprinted, 1975)

Leavis (Widdowson, 1975:72-73) defends the teaching of English literature on the following grounds:

> The essential discipline of an English school is the literary-critical; it is a true discipline, only in an English school if anywhere will it be fostered, and it is irreplaceable. It trains, in a way no other discipline can, intelligence and sensibility together, cultivating sensitiveness and precision of response and a delicate integrity of intelligence--intelligence that integrates as well as analyzes and must have pertinacity and staying power as well as delicacy. . . . There is no needed to add at the moment, by the way of indicating the inherent educational possibilities of the literary-critical discipline, than that it can, in its peculiar preoccupation with the concrete, provide an incomparably inward and subtle initiation into the nature and significance of tradition.

Later on, and especially in the 1930s (Mathieson, 1975:26-27), the teaching of English literature was viewed by Leavis and his followers (such as David Holbrook and Peter Abbs) as an effective measure to counteract "the debased exploitative commercial culture" and the "brutalising affects of the cheap press," as well as to fulfill the need for spiritualism in an age "demented in its pursuit for exact knowledge and verifiable answers." As the status of classics and the power of religion declined, English literature was thought to be the answer to industrialism, rationalism, and empericism (Mathieson, 1975:27). Abbs (1976:184-185), towards the end of his book on the formulation of English politics, outrageously affirms that we live "in a nervous age; a time of apocalypse, in which every day we witness a further extinction of individual qualities and achievements." He talks about the "pervasive feeling that civilization has disappeared completely," and vehemently calls for the cultivation of poetry in its broadest sense: the creation of symbols, the cultivation of style, and the search for a numinous circumference to counteract the commercial activities "falsely generated by an inhuman economy." Leavis and his followers demanded

"warriors," teachers who would fight.

These and similar statements are difficult to accept because of their lack of scientism and because, as Widdowson (1975:73) points out, they "resemble propaganda rather than a reasoned set of proposals." Besides, other disciplines may justifiably claim whatever the "literary-critical" discipline has set out to achieve in terms of the previous quotations. These effects can come about, as Widdowson (1975:74), affirms "through a heightened awareness of the way language can be used to explore and express realities other than which is communally accepted as the most socially convenient." The signs and clues used in literature are necessarily linguistic.

In addition to that, literary studies (even in British universities) have not been structured in such a way as to develop such a sensitivity--what is taught at the school and university level is "critical orthodoxy, a set of ready made judgements for rote learning rather than strategies of understanding which can be transferred to other unknown literary works" (Widdowson, 1975:75). Widdowson quotes C. S. Lewis (1961) to describe the situation at British universities' literature departments, where "young people are drenched, dizzled and bedevilled by criticism to a point at which primary literary experience is no longer possible." Those students are often preoccupied with other people's interpretation of literature rather than their own.

The question to be posed now is whether it is possible to bring about those effects through the study of other literatures such as Spanish, Arabic, or African. Some chauvinists, especially those who still take pride in the imperialist accomplishments of colonial Britain, still maintain that English literature is not only superior to other literatures, but is the best literature in the world and that such effects as those mentioned earlier can be brought about only through the study of English. Such a view is a striking

example of prejudice, bias, and narrow mindedness; and is by no means restricted to native English speakers. Some nonnative speakers often express this view: English literature is to be studied because it is English.

> Needless to say, students of English literature, wherever they are, can be expected to draw from their studies the benefits of "English" as a broad, flexible and liberal discipline, concerned with a literature which is not clearly excelled by any other, either in quality or continuity over a long period of time. (Holloway; quoted by Widdowson, 1975:77)

The following statement exemplifies the attitudes of the proponents of this view, not only to the "lesser breed," but also to other Westerners and Western languages:

> I have no knowledge of either Sanskrit or Arabic. But I am quite ready to take the oriental learning at the valuation of the orientalists themselves. I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. . . . The claim of our own language is hardly necessary to recapitulate. It stands pre-eminent even among the languages of the West . . . . Whoever knows that language has ready access to all the vast intellectual wealth which all the wisest nations of the earth have created and hoarded in the course of ninety generations. (The Honorable T. B. Macauly; quoted by Daswani, 1982)

If those arguments are rejected, we are left with two choices, as Widdowson (1975:77) maintains. One of these is to study literature for a cultural purpose, "to acquaint students with ways of looking at the world which characterize the cultures of the English-speaking peoples." In this case, literature becomes a repository of factual data, and would be inevitably distorted if taught as such. Moreover, factual knowledge may be better taught using materials other than literature.

The second choice, and also the main justification for teaching English literature in TW universities, Widdowson (1975) concludes, is to teach in terms of its definition as a linguistic subject. Because our students are interested in learning the language per se, they would be interested in seeing how the whole language system is

used in the actual business of communication. Literature, in that case, would provide the learner with the "widest variety of syntax, the richest variations of vocabulary discriminations" and would provide examples of language "employed at its most effective, subtle, and suggestive" (Povey, 1979:162). In the final analysis, according to Povey, it serves as an encouragement to the "limited linguistic achievement of the foreign student."

Widdowson's approach has received support from many of those who are concerned with the teaching of English literature to foreign students of English. Having discussed the English language teaching situation in India, Daswani (1982:99) concludes:

> Given the situation, the university departments of English would have to reform their curricula to meet the changing demands of the society. As more learners come to the universities, traditional English literature courses would have to give way to more realistic courses in English as a language of intergroup and intercountry communication.

Strevens (1978:60) theorizes that the principal justification for teaching the English language twenty years ago was to introduce the students to the study and appreciation of English literature, but the strength of this justification "has evaporated" in favor of a much stronger reason--the language's evident usefulness and practicality. Literature, however, still retains a place for arts oriented students.

Rodger (1983) of the University of Edinburgh agrees with this view. He maintains that literature constitutes a special domain of linguistic communication. While both nonliterary and literary communication use conventionally appropriate language for communication, the latter uses signals to mark the literary quality of its messages. In other words, creative writers have developed special conventions of poetic, novelistic, and dramatic communication to make their messages stand out against "linguistically normal, non-literary discourse." Consequently,

Rodger views the student of English literature in a second language setting as needing the knowledge of how to recognize the special conventions that operate in the domain of literary communication (which are usually more implicit than explicit) and how to make sense of what authors of literature exploit in the code to convey meaning. "Communication awareness" and "language conciousness" are skills needed by foreign students.

Along these lines, Moody (1983:25-36) proposes a model for the teaching of English literature based on a theory of literature. Two dimensions for that approach, the extrinsic and the intrinsic, are further detailed to produce what Rodger calls communication awareness and language consciousness. The extrinsic component deals with the external factors in a literary piece, and include the biographical, historical, aesthetic, and philosophical levels. The intrinsic component deals with the internal factors, which include the grammatical, lexical, structural, and cultural levels.

Munro (1983:60-61), who has had long experience teaching English literature in the Middle East, strongly supports an approach similar to Widdowson's. He believes that the teaching of English language is inseparable from the teaching of English literature; however, he feels that the primary concern of a teacher of English as a foreign literature is to "concentrate on the literary texts themselves, clarifying their meaning and assisting students to perceive the precision and vitality of the language the author has employed." By teaching English literature this way, Munro believes the student will have a far greater, richer, deeper, more comprehensive understanding of the English language. "If TEFL is important," Munro concludes, "TEFLIT is equally so." The trend of teaching literature for a linguistic purpose seems to be gaining ground in different parts of the world. In a recent issue of the English Teaching Forum, most of the articles were devoted to

practical, in-class techniques for implementing this trend. Prodromou (1985) and Gonzalez (1985) are particular examples of that trend.

In view of these arguments, it can be tentatively concluded that what suits a TW university is a department of general English which has a balanced program; a program that caters to the interest of the student, responds to the needs of his community, and contributes to the student's development. Lattorre and Palacios (1980), in a detailed article on the projected organization of the foreign language department, outline the demands on the services of an English department in a TW university (English for Special Purposes, teacher training, continuing language training for the community, distance teaching, etc.) and state that the accomplishment of those ends is contingent on the realization of language teaching as a discipline with great potential for growth and experimentation. The objectives of such a department in the Arab World are outlined by the author (Zughoul, 1985) in an earlier paper, but may well apply to any TW country.

1. The major objective of the English department in the Arab world is to graduate "competent" English specialists, i.e., people who have acquired a native-like "competence" in English. If the word "competent" needs to be specified in more specific, operational terms, it means that the graduate:
   a. can understand standard English as spoken by natives and nonnatives in a variety of contexts and in different situations, and be able to recognize some major dialectal variations, emotional overtones, levels of discourse, sound patterns, and grammatical sequences.
   b. can express himself fluently in spoken English with comprehensible accuracy in phonology and close to native accuracy in syntax in different contexts and different situations.
   c. can, at a reasonable speed, derive meaning from written English with ease and accuracy in different contexts.
   d. can express himself fluently in writing using English idiomatic expressions that show mastery of the major syntactic structures of the language as well as the fine semantic distinctions expressed by frequent lexical and syntactic patterns of the language.
   e. can, with ease and accuracy, translate messages and discourse in different contexts from his native language into English and vice versa.
   f. has gained an insight into the present day target culture,

which manifests then an understanding of the native speakers' modes of thinking and of their sociocultural patterns in the context of contrast to his own native culture.

g. has acquired the necessary linguistic and technical skills to carry out research.

2. Contribute to better international understanding and to the promotion of cultural exchange by familiarizing the student with another culture.
3. Collaborate with other programs in the university to provide an all-around education to the student. Teaching English literature or literature written in English in the student native language is a particular example of this kind of collaboration.
4. Service the particular English language needs of other departments, colleges, and faculties in the university by continually surveying these needs and by writing, developing, evaluating, and teaching programs tailored to these needs. To be more specific, the objective here is to implement the international trend in language teaching, which is teaching Language for Special Purposes (LSP).
5. The research needs of English as a language or as a literature are well taken care of by scholars in the English-speaking countries, but English as a foreign language taught under these socio-cultural conditions is not well researched. It should be the responsibility of the English department to direct its graduate programs to the more applied fields of English linguistics and English as a foreign language.

It should be made clear at this point that a major preoccupation of the English department in a TW country should always be the provision of an all around education to the student rather than the restricted provision of language training. However, there will be a number of students (that number may not exceed three to five percent in my estimation) whose aptitude and serious interests lie in the study of literature. These students may have the potential to be creative writers in English or in their native languages. In addition, there may be the same number of students who have the potential and the intention to go to English-speaking countries for postgraduate study in English literature. For those two groups of students, Pratt (1982) suggests the establishment of an honors track in the department that would cater to the interests of this group. These students can also be identified early and sent to an institute in the country that serves their interests and needs, or they can be sent directly to English seaking countries for

literature degrees.

The foregoing arguments should not imply advocacy for the exclusion of the literature component from our programs. On the contrary, if criteria are well established for such inclusion, the literary component can serve as a motivating factor instead of being an impediment to the progress of the student. It will certainly make the study of literature an enjoyable exercise in appreciation rather than "take on the character of a mysterious and perversely roundabout way."

The teaching of English literature with those objectives in mind necessitates shifts of emphasis from the old to the modern and contemporary, from aesthetic or historic criteria of inclusion to pedagogic. In genre this means a switch from poetry to prose.

Because of the preoccupation of academicians with the spatial view of literature development, it has been considered a standard practice in English departments in TW countries to correlate the chronological development of English literature with the four-year program so that a student starts to study modern or contemporary literature in his fourth year. Pratt (1982) gives the example of Polish universities, where first-year students were to study Medieval English literature in their first year and modern literature in their fifth year, and cites the British Council's suggestion that "the entire syllabus be stood on its head." Reversing the chronology could be more helpful to our students than starting with Chaucer and ending up with contemporary literature. In fact, it has been the writer's experience as a student of literature and later on as a teacher of language that the study of medieval literature in the freshman or sophomore years is a painful exercise that rarely goes beyond glossing vocabulary items on the margins of the text. Harrison (1974:55) strongly suggests the avoidance of literature which is "the fossilized droppings of

another age, included for vaguely-felt reasons of historical completeness," and "to the argument that one would be cutting off students from the roots of English culture the reply is that although English culture may be unique, it is not of unique importance to all; people have their own cultures to worry about." Harrison concludes that the study of English literature "as all-embracing a historical perspective as desired" is a specialist study that may suit postgraduate students.

In this connection, Pratt's (1982) criterion of "accessibility" seems to be practical, appealing, and realistic. It also serves the purpose of language teaching/learning best, especially in the early years of study at the English department. By accessibility, Pratt means the correlation of "literary and linguistic case difficulty" to the neglect of theme, genre, or chronology as criteria of selection. The criterion of accessibility is further detailed by Harrison (1974), who recommends as a first criterion for the inclusion of literature that:

> . . .there be no discontinuity between the lexis, structure and style of the literature and the lexis, structure and style already mastered by the student. Literature is not initial teaching material, nor, if the student is to gain aesthetic experience analogous to that achieveable by the native speaker, should it be done to death by linguistic exercises or the need for constant dictionary references.

The other shift of emphasis that should be made is from the teaching of poetry to the inclusion of prose, preferably modern prose. To fulfill the objectives outlined earlier, students in TW universities need to study lengthy discourse instead of spending that time on the study of poetry. The author (Zughoul, 1983) drew on research evidence from the fields of linguistics and stylistics to support his advocacy of avoiding poetry in favor of prose. Poetry sometimes gets so deviant from natural language or common language to the point where one questions the validity of its

inclusion in the English department in a a TW country on a wide scale. "The violation of the norm of the standard, its systematic violation," the Prague school of linguistics (Freeman, 1977) affirms, "is what makes possible the poetic utilization of language; without this possibility there would be no poetry." Within the generative transformational framework, the grammar of natural languages cannot account for these deviations (Freeman, 1977). Corder (1976) considers the language of poetry as an idiosyncratic dialect in the same class with those of the learner of a foreign language, the infant learning his mother tongue, and the speech of an aphasic, which share the characteristics of being unstable, transitional, different from social dialects, and which need peculiar sets of rules to account for their generation.

Lott (1983:102) gives examples from Dylan Thomas's "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night" of deviations from normal English syntax, which he later calls "exceptional, even excellent." Those deviations may be acceptable for a native speaker, or for someone who takes real interest in the study of literature, but they are definitely not that "exceptional" and "excellent" for a foreign student in an English department in a TW country. Harrison (1975), after studying a well-known poem by Thomas Nashe ("Spring the Sweet Spring. . ."), concludes that the poem is a "very good recipe for structural and semantic confusion, because of its grammatical bugbears on the structural level and archaic usage on the lexical level." Having taught the poem, Harrison had the impression that "it was at best an exercise in ritual and incantatory mysticism," and that his students could not get any aesthetic or other worthwhile literary experience.

Again, the writer does not advocate the exclusion of poetry from the curriculum of the English department in a TW country. What is being advocated is a lessening of emphasis on poetry in favor of

more modern prose. Moreover, there must be poetry in English which is appealing and linguistically meets our criterion, even partly. Eastman (1969:57) talks about a new trend which he called the "cult of unintelligibility in modern poetry" which "decreases the range, volume and definiteness of communication." Such poetry may discourage the student and create negative attitudes towards poetry as a genre; so it is to be avoided.

Some measures should be taken to ensure that the content of the literature taught is worth handling in a TW English department. English literature is partly propagandistic and colonialist in spirit. Asfoor (1983) gives examples of such utterings that are difficult to sympathize with: "better fifty years of Europe than a Cycle of Cathay in Tennyson's "Locksley Hall" and "for once sailed the sea to crush the Moslem in his pride" in Tennyson's "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After." He also cites several examples from the works of George Eliot and Israel Zargwill that further the Jewish and Zionist causes. The most striking in this respect are the writings of Rudyard Kipling, which flatly advocate imperialism and racism.

Teaching English literature to students in the TW is strewn with different problems. Dahiyyat (1983) and Asfoor (1983) talk about a number of cultural, moral, and national barriers which can be serious impediments confronting Arab students of English literature. These same barriers might confront other students in TW countries. What is recommended here is the avoidance of literature that is imperialistic, racist, or which conflicts directly with the moral, ethical, and social codes of the students.

Using more of the literature written by native authors in some TW countries may frequently ensure that the content is acceptable to the student and relevant to his own experience. In this connection, Harrison (1974:47) advocates more use of literature written in

English by native authors. He believes that the novels of China Achebe or the plays of Wole Soyinka present no problem of background to Nigerian students, for example; the novels of R. K. Narayan would be much more readily comprehensible by Indian students than those of Sir Walter Scott. Harrison concludes by giving still another example:

> I have on my desk a book called "Tales from the Copperbelt," the results of a short story competition among ordinary Zambians, not professional authors. Although some of the stories might not be of very high literary merit, they do at least mirror the lives and aspirations of Zambians much more closely than anything by Glasworthy, Antony Hope, or Conan Doyle.

Discussing "irrelevance" inherent in the teaching of English literature to foreign learners, Mukherjee (1982:35) asserts that the English literature student gets so accustomed to reading books that relate to another society and another culture with very little exposure to literature that relates to his real world that "gradually the verbal world begins to seem more real than the extentional world." Such a situation obscures the means through which a student might relate to the real contexts of his own environment and his own culture. Even literary critics in such a situation, maintains Mukherjee, take their premises from books, apply them to other books, and finally record them in yet another book. "At no stage in the process do the ideas emerge out of the books to touch life."

It can be concluded that a department of general English where language, literature, linguistics, and methodology components are incorporated to build up the linguistic competence of the graduate and prepare him to take a job to meet the needs of his community is what suits a TW country. In contrast to English-speaking countries, though, literature is taught for a linguistic purpose in TW English departments. Such an approach for teaching literature also requires

shifts of emphasis to be made and selection measures to be exercised on the inclusion of literature in the syllabus. Students who have special aptitude and take special interest in the study of literature can be sent to an English-speaking country or to a special literature institute or department in TW countries. Other format alternatives for the teaching of English literature have been forwarded by different researchers and specialists; these approaches are worth looking into by TW universities. Some of these were listed previously by the author (Zughoul, 1985).

1. Teaching English literature for a linguistic purpose, shifting emphasis from the old to the modern and from aesthetic and historic criteria to pedagogic criteria of selection and in genre from poetry to prose. Teaching literature aims at having students enrich their understanding of the English language (Widdowson, 1975; Harrison, 1974; Munro, 1983; Zughoul, 1983).
2. If one of our main objectives for the teaching of English literature is to enrich our literature by benefitting from the resultant contributions of English, it is the duty of faculty members to start teaching English literature in the native language. It was justifiable to stick to English in the teaching of English literature because the British were in full control of a number of countries worldwide (Jawad, 1983).
3. If the ideal focus of our students--or of our departments, for that matter--is on the study of literature, it follows that other literatures can be as valuable for our students' purposes. Thus, the establishment of a comparative literature department would serve the purposes better (Dahiyyat, 1983).
4. Instead of replicating the programs of English departments in English-speaking countries, Ibrahim (1983) recommends following the pattern of European universities (based on his examination of the offerings of the English department of the University of Heidelberg), where the programs are more balanced and more suited to the students' needs. The language component, for example, includes five courses in English grammar and syntax, three courses in writing, six courses in translation, two courses in pronunciation, three courses in reading and discussion, two courses in word formation and one course in English stylistics. Another recent experience worth considering is that of Ireland, where the National Institute of Higher Education has started a new applied languages degree to respond to the changing needs of the country as a member in the European Common Community. The program in applied language study is primarily designed to graduate translators, interpreters, international marketers. An examination of the program (O'Connell and Pearson, 1985:5) shows that it does not include any literature; rather, it includes "currents of thought" courses.
5. The study of English as aesthetic verbal art is responsible for the reduction of chances for training students in "English as a Medium of Communication (EMC)," maintains Okby (1982). Okby recommends accepting a broader definition of literature to include works in both fact and fiction. He also recommends

adopting a "functionally oriented language theory." The study of literature as a verbal art remains a privilege for those who have a keen interest in the study of literature.

6. Though the cultural background of much English literature is hostile, especially when colonialist values of some writers such as Kipling are considered, English literature courses can be taught and contrasted along with the works of anticolonialist writers in English such as Narayan, Naipaul, Brutus, Thiongo, and Mphalete (Wood, 1983).
7. In many TW countries (for example, the formerly colonial African nation, the main problem that afflicts the teaching of English literature and creative literature in general is "aesthetic dualism," a problem inherent in the cultural ambivalence of a colonial situation. The problem is a sharp cleavage between the foreign and the indigenous and between the "pull of western artistic influences and the stability of old modes of creativity" (Mazrui, 1972:39-52). Mazrui views greater localization and the diversification of the foreign part of aesthetic dualism to reduce the sharpness of the cleavage as two paradoxical processes taking place at the English departments of East African countries as measures to mitigate aesthetic dualism. He gives particular examples of the trend: the Makerere University and the University of Nairobi, where the department of English focuses on English literature studies; and Dar es Salam, where there are two departments, a department of literature and a department of language and linguistics which teach different languages and literary traditions in the complete absence of an English department. The other two departments are also moving toward diversifying the foreign component of their dualism (Mazrui, 1972:39-52).

It is understandable that change in TW educational institutions could be difficult and slow paced because a whole generation of old timers running those institutions may feel more secure with the established patterns. However, it is time for those to realize, as Bordie (1985) points out in this connection, that "the application of old, somewhat stereotyped procedures to existing situations is not likely to lead to meaningful or beneficial solutions if only because older procedures have been superseded by procedures which relate directly to present day needs." Indeed, "solving today's problems with yesterday's answers is what has gotten us into the bind we are in now."

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